

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 7-11 are pending in this application, with claim 7 being the only independent claim. Claims 7-11 stand rejected. In light of the remarks set forth below, Applicants respectfully submit that, for the reasons discussed below, each of the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record and are therefore in condition for immediate allowance.

Claims 7-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0158879 (“Broghammer”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,785,472 (“Adams”).

As disclosed in the present specification and explicitly recited in the claims, each audio/visual appliance has an optical coupler with filters for separating said first and second data channels. In other words, each audio/visual appliance can receive and process both the first and second data channels. For example, the first data channel is used to transport audio data from the broadcast radio receiver 3 or the DAB receiver 4 on a first wavelength and the second data channel is used to transmit IP data, for example from the DVD player 7, on a second light wavelength. Each AV appliance has a coupler 20 by means of which the signals modulated on the light wavelength of the first or second data channel can be injected on to the optical fibers of the network 1.

Among the limitations of independent claim 7 not present in the cited combination are “audio/video appliances connected to one another in a ring shape by said optical network, wherein data are transmitted between said audio/video appliances in said network in a first data channel having a first optical wavelength and in a second data channel having a second optical wavelength, each of said audio/video appliances having an optical coupler with filters for separating said first and second data channels.”

The Office Action acknowledges that Broghammer does not explicitly disclose the above quoted limitation. After noting this deficiency, the Office Action introduces Adams. However, Adams fails to cure the noted deficiency in Broghammer.

The Examiner asserts that Adams discloses that each of said audio/video appliances has an optical filter for separating the first and second data channels. The Examiner asserts that the optical filter is shown in Fig. 2 as optical coupler 110 with filter 210. Optical coupler 110 with filter 210 is tuned to wavelength λ_0 . (Office Action at p. 3).

Applicants note that the filter 210 in Adams is tuned to a single specific frequency, in this case λ_0 , and is not the claimed optical coupler with filters separating said first and second data channels. As shown in Adams's Fig. 2, each of the nodes is configured to receive only a single wavelength. Specifically, node 110 receives λ_1 , node 111 receives λ_k , and node 112 receives λ_7 . In other words, each node is tuned to a specific wavelength. Thus, each of Adams's nodes is configured for only a single wavelength, not the claimed first optical wavelength of the first data channel and the second optical wavelength of the second data channel.

It is clear that each node if Adams is provided for only a single frequency and none of the appliances disclosed by Adams is able to communicate on two wavelengths and Adams fails to disclose "each of said audio/video appliances having an optical coupler with filters for separating said first and second data channels". Thus, Adams fails to cure the deficiency noted in Broghammer by the Examiner.

Because neither reference, whether taken alone or in combination discloses audio/video appliances connected to one another in a ring shape by said optical network, wherein data are transmitted between said audio/video appliances in said network in a first data channel having a first optical wavelength and in a second data channel having a second optical wavelength, each of said audio/video appliances having an optical coupler with filters for separating said first and second data channels, claims 7-11 are allowable.

Applicant has responded to all of the rejections and objections recited in the Office Action. Reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance for all of the pending claims are therefore

respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes an interview would be of assistance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: November 11, 2009